

Archbishop backs tax justice

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As [the Guardian has reported](#) this morning:

The archbishop of Canterbury, [Justin Welby](#), has intervened in the debate about responsible business and the use of tax havens, saying he wants companies to pay tax in the countries where they have generated their wealth.

Welby is due to give a speech on “the good economy” at a conference organised by the all-party parliamentary group on inclusive growth in London on Wednesday evening.

Christian Aid issued a press release in response that I am happy to quote:

Archbishop Justin Welby’s comments today about the importance of companies paying their fair share of tax in the countries where they make their money are extremely welcome, says Christian Aid.

“We are delighted to hear the Archbishop speaking out about this great problem of our time. Many big companies are abusing their power and failing to contribute their fair share back to society, both in the UK and in developing countries,” said Toby Quantrill, Principal Economic Justice Adviser at Christian Aid.

“There is a huge moral dimension to tax so it is especially good to hear Justin Welby bringing his moral authority, as well as his business experience, to bear on the subject.

“Ahead of the UK general election, we and others are challenging all political parties to commit to introducing a Tax Dodging Bill to tackle many of the problems he highlighted.”

The Archbishop of Canterbury’s comments came in an interview with BBC Radio 4’s Today programme ahead of a speech he will give this evening about the importance of reconnecting wealth creation with social justice.

In the radio interview, he spoke out strongly about the principle of companies paying tax where they earn their money. He also linked the misuse of the tax system to the

accumulation of wealth and power that results from the growing inequality in society.

He told the BBC: "There has always been the principle that you pay tax where you earn the money. If you earn money in a particular country, the revenue service of that country needs to get a fair share of what you have earned."

Tax avoidance, and its impact in poor countries, is something that Christian Aid has campaigned on for many years. In 2014 we explored the links between tax, theology and morality, in our report Tax for the Common Good.

The campaign for a Tax Dodging Bill is supported by 17 organisations, including Christian Aid, Oxfam, Action Aid, Church Action on Poverty, the Church Urban Fund, the NUS and the Equality Trust.

Tax Research UK is now one of the supporting organisations. I wish to make that clear. I am not objective on this issue. I can quite definitely say I am wholly biased in favour of social justice. I am glad the Archbishop is too.